

REMARKS

At the outset, the Examiner is thanked for the thorough review and consideration of the pending application. The Office Action dated April 2, 2010, has been received and its contents carefully reviewed.

Claims 1 and 10 have been amended. Claims 8-9, 11, and 17-20 and 23 were previously canceled without prejudice or disclaimer to the subject matter contained therein. Accordingly, claims 1-7, 10, 12-16, and 21-22 are currently pending. Reexamination and reconsideration are respectfully requested.

Rejection on the grounds of Double Patenting

Claims 1, 3-4, 10, 12 and 13 are provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over Claims 1, 6-9, 14-16 and 19 of co-ending Appln. No. 10/580,115. *Office Action* at p. 4.

Applicant respectfully disagrees. Applicant notes that this is a provisional rejection and both applications are still pending. Accordingly, Applicant reserves the right to further address this rejection upon an indication of allowability of this application.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1-7, 10, 12-16 and 21-23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,337,500 to Enokizono (hereinafter *Enokizono*) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,277,210 to Kim (hereafter, *Kim*). *Office Action* at p. 4. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

Independent claim 1, as amended, recites, *inter alia*, “ wherein the air duct further includes a portion between the condensed water discharge port and the vapor exhaust port, the portion being inclined at a predetermined angle to dispose the condensed water discharge port lower than the vapor exhaust port, **wherein the air duct forms a vapor passage, comprised of a plurality of vertically stacked horizontal duct segments spaced apart from each other in a vertical direction, a first end of a topmost horizontal duct segment being fluidly coupled to the blower, and each of the remaining plurality of horizontal segments being fluidly**

connected to the horizontal duct segment directly above it by a curved duct segment such that the air duct folds horizontally back and forth upon itself to form a vertical stack of horizontal duct segments.”

Neither Enokizono nor Kim disclose or suggest at least these features of the claimed invention. Enokizono teaches a linear circulation duct 56 comprises an upper duct 58 and a rear duct 60, as seen in Fig. 1. *See* Col. 3, ln. 9-10. Therefore, Enokizono does not disclose or suggest **“the air duct forms a vapor passage, comprised of a plurality of vertically stacked horizontal duct segments spaced apart from each other in a vertical direction, a first end of a topmost horizontal duct segment being fluidly coupled to the blower, and each of the remaining plurality of horizontal segments being fluidly connected to the horizontal duct segment directly above it by a curved duct segment such that the air duct folds horizontally back and forth upon itself to form a vertical stack of horizontal duct segments,”** as claimed. Further, Kim does not cure the deficiencies of Enokizono. As seen in Fig. 1, Kim discloses a drying duct 100 that is formed of an oval tube having straight lower and upper surfaces. *See* Col. 3, ln. 18-20. Therefore, Kim does not disclose or suggest **“the air duct forms a vapor passage, comprised of a plurality of vertically stacked horizontal duct segments spaced apart from each other in a vertical direction, a first end of a topmost horizontal duct segment being fluidly coupled to the blower, and each of the remaining plurality of horizontal segments being fluidly connected to the horizontal duct segment directly above it by a curved duct segment such that the air duct folds horizontally back and forth upon itself to form a vertical stack of horizontal duct segments,”** as claimed.

For at least these reasons, independent claim 1 is not *prima facie* obvious and is patentable over the cited references. Claims 2-7 and 21 depend from and added further features to independent claim 1. Accordingly, Applicant requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. §103(a) rejection and allowance of claims 1-7 and 21.

Similarly, independent claim 10 is allowable over the cited references in that claim 10, as amended, recites, *inter alia*, **“the air duct further includes: a plurality of horizontal parts forming a plurality of horizontal air duct segments; a plurality of vertical parts, configured to be bent upward from a first end of a horizontal air duct segment and downward from a second end, opposite to the first end, wherein each upwardly bent vertical part is in fluid**

communication with a corresponding downwardly bent vertical part of the horizontal segment immediately above it, so that the air duct folds horizontally back and forth upon itself to form a vertical stack of horizontal duct segments.” As discussed above with regards to claim 1, neither Enokizono nor Kim disclose or suggest at least these features of claim 10.

For at least these reasons, independent claim 10 is not *prima facie* obvious and is patentable over the cited references. Claims 12-16 and 22 depend from and added further features to independent claim 10. Accordingly, Applicant requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. §103(a) rejection and allowance of claims 10, 12-16 and 22.

CONCLUSION

If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at (202) 496-7500 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance. All correspondence should continue to be sent to the below-listed address.

If these papers are not considered timely filed by the Patent and Trademark Office, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136, and any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 for any necessary extension of time, or any other fees required to complete the filing of this response, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0911. Please credit any overpayment to deposit Account No. 50-0911.

Respectfully submitted,

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